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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0808
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 9028
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 6410
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0384
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 7594
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 4640
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 0504
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 4975
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 6296
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 7258
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 2022
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 1786
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 000744

SIPDIS

WHA/CCA G.ZAMBRANO; WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/23/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [ETRD](#) [KDEM](#) [BL](#) [CU](#)
SUBJECT: BOLIVIA-CUBA RELATIONS: RESPONSE TO TITLE III OF
THE LIBERTAD ACT

REF: A. SECSTATE 48487
[1](#)B. 08 LA PAZ 02581

Classified By: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION CHRIS LAMBERT FOR REASONS
1.4 (b) AND (d)

[1](#)1. (U) The following responses are keyed to the questions in
reftel A and reflect new developments since reftel B.

[1](#)2. (C) Has the host country, in Post's opinion, worked to
promote advancement of democracy and human rights in Cuba?

--No. The Bolivian government continues to see Cuba as a
viable path for development.

[1](#)3. (C) Has the host country made other public statements or
undertaken governmental actions ... or actions in support of
civil society in Cuba through host country's diplomatic
missions or other fora?

--No. To the contrary, Bolivian government officials are
uniformly supportive of the Cuban government. Bolivian
President Evo Morales considers Fidel Castro an "advisor" and
"a very wise man".

-- Morales continues to advocate for Cuba's readmission into
the OAS (reftel B). In April, Evo spoke at the OAS' Fifth
Summit of the Americas in Trinidad. He remarked that Cuba was
excluded from the OAS because of its Marxist-Leninist
government and proclaimed "Well then, I declare myself
Marxist, Leninist, communist and socialist. Let's see if they
will expel Bolivia".

[1](#)4. (C) Have there been any high-level diplomatic visits
between Cuba and host country in the past six months?

--No. President Morales canceled a scheduled diplomatic visit
to Cuba in April in order to stage a five day hunger strike,
which was meant to pressure the Bolivian Congress into
passing a bill with new electoral laws. The visit has not
been rescheduled.

15. (C) Did the host country offer or deliver humanitarian or other assistance to the Cuban people in the wake of the major damage caused by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike (reftel A)?

--President Morales "expressed interest" in Cuba's recovery from the hurricanes December 3 and explained that Bolivia would try to help by sending a letter to the participants of the Climate Summit being held in Poland and generally work to counter effects of climate change. There have been no additional efforts since the last cable (reftel B).

16. (C) What is the nature of investments (and names, if known) that host country businesses have in Cuba?

--There are no known investments by Bolivian businesses in Cuba.

17. (C) Are there any bilateral trade agreements between host country and Cuba?

--Per refs, there is a cooperative trade agreement between Bolivia and Cuba. Both countries are also members of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) and its &People's Trade Agreement⁸ created by Venezuelan President Chavez. Trade between the two countries remains relatively insignificant, totaling approximately \$300,000 USD according to Bolivian government reports for the first quarter of 2009 (Note: Compared with \$500,000 for all of 2008. End Note.) For the first time, Bolivia exported beans, fuel and manufactured aluminum to Cuba. All previous exports to Cuba have been chocolate candy and cooking oil. Post is researching the change in exported goods.

18. (C) Are there any exchange programs between the host country and Cuba?

--Cuban doctors continue to provide medical assistance to Bolivians across the country. The Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs claims that there are an estimated 2,000 doctors in Bolivia, however the actual number is unclear (reftel B). In March, Morales applauded Cuban and Venezuelan efforts to mitigate Dengue Fever outbreak in Bolivia and asked that doctors focus on eradicating the disease in Trinidad and Beni.

--The "Yes I Can Continue" literacy program, a follow on to the original "Yes I Can" program, is being implemented with Cuban and Venezuelan assistance (reftel B). In March, Morales publicly thanked these two nations for bringing the program to Chipaya, Bolivia and stated that the fight against illiteracy continues to allow the Bolivian people to recover their "national identity" and "decolonize" the nation. According to the Cuban News Agency, the Minister of Education Roberto Aguilar made statements regarding his desire to increase minimum national education standards to the fifth grade. He added that the program will be expanded with the opening of 25 technical schools throughout the country, although it is not clear when the schools will open. The national director of the program, Benito Ayma, claimed that an estimated 45,000 Bolivians will receive further education beyond the basic literacy provided through the "Yes I Can" program in 185 municipalities and 350,000 of an expected one million students will be attending school within the program by the end of the year.

19. (C) COMMENT. The Morales government looks up to the Cuban government as a model for its own revolutionary "movement towards socialism". Venezuela and Cuba continue to exert their influence in Bolivia by providing logistical support and personnel for medical and literacy programs. Please note, we have no independent means of validating official Bolivian government statistics or the Castro math applied to the self-documented statistical benefits of Cuban social programs in Bolivia. END COMMENT.

URS